

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION-REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

COUNTRY	Bulgaria	REPORT	<input type="text"/>	25X1
SUBJECT	The City of Plovdiv	DATE DISTR.	16 February 1953	
		NO. OF PAGES	8	
DATE OF INFO.	<input type="text"/>	REQUIREMENT NO.	RD	25X1
PLACE ACQUIRED	<input type="text"/>	REFERENCES		

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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In spite of the fact that this report contains old information,
it is being disseminated for whatever current value it may have.

1. Plovdiv (N 42-08, E 24-45) is located in southern Bulgaria. The city is built on a plain known as the Plovdiv Plain. The Rodope Mountains are very close to the city, and the Maritsa River flows through the center of town, but is not a navigable waterway.¹ The surrounding countryside is covered by fields and vineyards, and no land is left uncultivated.

World War II Destruction

2. During World War II, Plovdiv was attacked twice by planes.² The attacks were not on the center of the city and the bombs fell in three places in a poor area of small houses. A few houses were damaged and immediately repaired. The opinion on these raids at the time was that they were made not for destruction and damage but for the purpose of intimidation.

Construction Since 1945

3. The outstanding construction in Plovdiv since 1945 is:³
 - a. Maternity hospitals at three different points in the city;
 - b. Large market buildings reserved for vegetables, meat, etc., in the poor quarter which is known as "Little Paris";

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25X1

-2-

- c. Large fair buildings on the banks of the Maritsa River in the southeast part of town;⁴
- d. A tunnel dug through Nebet Tepe (Sentinel Hill), from the eastern to the northern slope, having an overall length of at least $2\frac{1}{2}$ kilometers; the tunnel is intended to serve as a shelter in time of war, and at other times as an avenue; and
- e. An automobile factory in the southwestern part of town.

Factories⁵

- 4. There used to be several thread and textile factories in the city but these have been closed down, their machinery dismantled, and transferred to one building known as the Maritsa Factory, north of the city. The persons working here probably number about 1,000.⁶
- 5. There are a number of tobacco-processing warehouses near the Plovdiv Railway Station, probably employing more than 1,000 persons.⁷

Town Plan

- 6. With the exception of a few avenues in the center of the town, the lay-out of Plovdiv is not an orderly or planned one. After 9 September 1944 it was thought that it would be desirable to lay street-car tracks on the main thoroughfares, but the plan had to be abandoned when it was realized that the streets were not wide enough to permit two tracks to be laid down side by side.⁸ The avenues and streets in the center of town describe a checker-board pattern, but the other streets are completely irregular and may be wide or narrow, straight or crooked.⁹ Signs showing the names of the streets and avenues have been put up, and the streets are numbered with odd numbers on one side and the even on the other. The streets are illuminated by electricity at night. The main thoroughfare of the city runs between Sakhat Tepe and Nebet Tepe.
- 7. Buildings in the center of town are of three or four stories at the most, but generally are of two or three stories. Five-story buildings are rare. The materials most commonly used in construction are iron, cement, and brick. All the roofs are covered with tile. The colors of the buildings vary and may be sky-blue, yellow, white, or brick color.
- 8. The city's chief landmarks are its four hills, which are historically famous.¹⁰ They are:
 - a. Dzhenem Hill (Hell Hill);
 - b. Bunardzhik Hill (Little Spring Hill); there is a military observation post on top of this hill and therefore civilians are not allowed to climb to the top;
 - c. Sakhat Hill (Clock Hill); there is a clock on top of this hill and a fire guard is always stationed there; and
 - d. Nebet Hill (Sentinel Hill); the tunnel described in paragraph 3, section d, above, runs through this hill.

Population

- 9. The majority of the population of Plovdiv (which probably numbers more than 150,000¹¹) is ethnically Bulgarian. There are some Turks, Armenians, and Jews in the city, but these have been emigrating and their number has decreased in recent years.¹² The chief religion of the people of Plovdiv is Christian Orthodox (sic) and about 75% of the people actively engage in religious practises, even

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25X1

-3-

since the Communists came to power. There are about 13 Bulgarian churches in the city.

10. There was an abnormal growth in the population of Plovdiv after 1945 for two reasons:
 - a. During the war, when Western Thrace was occupied, many people fled [redacted]; 25X1 these people returned after the area had been evacuated; and
 - b. Many villagers came to Plovdiv to seek work after the Communists came to power.

Railroads

11. Plovdiv has two railroad stations: one, the central station, called Gara Plovdiv, is on the southwest edge of town; the other, called Gara Filipovo, is outside of the city to the north. The freight depot is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ kilometers east of the central station. Its administration is separate from the others. Both railroad station buildings are modern and have two stories.¹³
12. The main Sofia-Svilengrad railroad line passes through Plovdiv. In addition, there is a branch line from the central station which runs as far as Asenovgrad. The Plovdiv-Stara Zagora, Plovdiv-Karlovo, and Plovdiv-Panagyurishte lines branch out from the Filipovo Station. All these railroad lines are normal gauge and single track lines.¹⁴
13. A two-car train operates between Plovdiv and Sofia twice every 24 hours. It leaves Plovdiv at 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. and is steam-operated.

Airport

14. The city has an airport, about one kilometer southwest of the city. It has four large buildings.

Buses

15. For local transportation, phaetons, horse-carts, buses, and trucks are used. Buses operate to all the towns and villages in the vicinity of Plovdiv which are not serviced by trains. The main lines go to Devin and Smolyan.

Government Office Locations

16. The central municipal offices are in a large building adjoining the Maritsa Pharmacy near the Maritsa River.¹⁵ The Food Commissariat, which concerns itself with food matters and which is attached to the municipality, is on the main thoroughfare, which is named Vasil Kolarov. The Tax and Internal Revenue Office and the Marriage and Identity Bureau are housed in the same building as the central municipal offices. There is a municipal health office.
17. There is one jail in Plovdiv. It is on the bank of the Maritsa River on the west side of town.¹⁶

Militia and State Security

18. The Okoliya Militia Command, the State Security, and the Criminal Militia are all housed in a large building in the center of town on General Skobelev Avenue.¹⁷ There are no militia barracks in Plovdiv. The motorized militia is stationed on Brezovska Avenue in the section of town known as Karsiyaka (the opposite shore) (sic).

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25X1

-4-

19. There are militia centers and guard stations at five points in Plovdiv:
 - a. in Khadzhihasan Quarter;
 - b. in Orta Mezar Quarter;
 - c. on Ivan Vazov Avenue in the center of town;
 - d. in the Communist Quarter known as "Little Paris"; and
 - e. near the hospital in Karsiyaka Quarter.
20. Sentinels from these stations are on duty at various posts during the day. Each guard station (not including the central office) has at least 30 militiamen.
21. There are no restrictions placed on the movements of citizens of Plovdiv. However, people whom the Militia regards with suspicion do not go out after nightfall because they are afraid that the Militia will pick them up. Patrols go on duty after nightfall and in addition, the most reliable Communist Party members patrol in twos, carrying arms.

Employment

22. There are two main classes of people in Plovdiv: officials and laborers. Today, there are four times as many officials as there were formerly, and an office which was formerly staffed with five people now has 25. Merchants, tradesmen, and other professionals who are not members of the Communist Party cannot find employment and exist by selling their belongings. They even accept ordinary (sic) jobs. They are being taken into an organization known as the "Union Organization". Membership is limited to persons who are not members of the parties in the Fatherland Front. Members can apply for jobs anywhere but will not be able to obtain white-collar jobs. One third of the people in Plovdiv are laborers; one third are officials; and one third are unemployed.

Black-Market

23. There used to be a black-market in Plovdiv. After the free stores opened, the black-market ceased to operate. When it existed, producers, officials in the Food Commissariat, and relatives of high-ranking personages in the present regime were involved in it. Of those caught, the Economic Militia, charged with prosecuting such cases, would not prosecute cases involving friends of Plovdiv officials.

Communist Party Club

24. The Communist Party Club is on the main thoroughfare of Plovdiv. The German Consulate next to the old Municipal Building has been converted into the Communists' main club.

Newspaper

25. Only one newspaper, Otechestven Glas (Voice of the Fatherland), is published in Plovdiv. It is a daily paper and contains mainly Party news. Its offices are located behind the Party Club.¹⁸

Radio

26. There are loud-speakers in Plovdiv over which only the programs of Radio Sofia are broadcasted. There are no restrictions on listening to other programs on privately-owned radios, but the radios of some individuals have been confiscated because they listened to [] broadcasts.

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-5-

Housing

27. There is an acute housing crisis in Plovdiv. It is very difficult to find a place to live. To find housing, a new arrival in the city must apply to the Housing Court, which considers only the applications of Communist Party members and government employees.
28. Almost all of the dwellings in Plovdiv were built to house individual families. Some of them take in roomers, but as these are people who have been arbitrarily settled in the houses by the government, such arrangements are not very satisfactory. There are no rooms or apartments in Plovdiv which are the property of cooperatives or of the municipality.

Hotels

29. The following hotels in Plovdiv [redacted] 25X1
- a. Bulgariya, in the center of town; it has three stories, the first of which is used for a cinema;
 - b. Balkan Turist, the largest hotel in Plovdiv, located in the center of town; it has three stories; part of its first floor is used for a restaurant, another part for a new-type store; it is patronized by arrivals from foreign countries;
 - c. Moskva, a 3-story hotel in the center of town; the ground floor is used for stores and a restaurant;
 - d. Trakya, a second-class 2-story hotel in the station area, operated by the State; and
 - e. Okhrid, a second-class 2-story hotel in the station area, operated by the State.

Health

30. Formerly there were several private hospitals and one State hospital in Plovdiv. The government has now taken over the private hospitals and has opened a general hospital. The Doctor Koev Hospital has been assigned to government employees; the Doctor Staykov Hospital to civilians; the Doctor Chomakov Hospital and the Roman Catholic Hospital, in the center of town, to the military.²⁰
31. People may apply to doctors without any special formalities during their visiting hours.
32. The Plovdiv cemeteries are outside the city to the west. There are also three graveyards inside the city but these are being eliminated.

Education

33. There are the following schools in Plovdiv:²¹
- a. The Medical Faculty;²²
 - b. The Agricultural Faculty;
 - c. Two men's and two girls' lycées;
 - d. A co-educational lycée;
 - e. A technical school; and
 - f. A girls' art school.
34. In order to attend the lycée it is necessary to be a member of the Dimitrov Union of the People's Youth. It is necessary to be an active Communist Party member in order to obtain a higher education.

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25X1

-6-

Cinemas

35. There are seven cinemas in Plovdiv. [redacted] Russian films were among those shown at the theaters.²³ 25X1

Sports

36. The most commonly-followed open-air sport in Plovdiv is football. There is a playing field near the airfield southwest of the city. The field has only open seating arrangements and there are no covered grandstands.²⁴

War Preparations

37. Although there are not many war preparations evident in Plovdiv, [redacted] in May 1950 village authorities had made a count of all the serviceable animals, carts, harnesses, and bicycles in the area, and [redacted] the same process carried out in Plovdiv. 25X1
25X1

Personality

38. The Chairman of the People's Municipal Council is Perpeliev (fnu).

Comments:

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1. [redacted] states that the Maritsa is navigable for barges during the season of greatest rainfall. [redacted] states that the Maritsa is not navigable because it dries up in the summer. 25X1
2. [redacted] Plovdiv did not suffer any war damage. 25X1
3. [redacted] new construction in the center of Plovdiv near the watch tower, where a tunnel was being dug, and new additions in the vicinity of the State hospital. [redacted] a new avenue was to be built which would extend as far as the station and would have a street-car line. 25X1
25X1
4. [redacted] mentions the Exhibition Halls of the Plovdiv Fair as being located on the southeastern slope of Bunardzhik Hill. In contrast to this, however, [redacted] the international fair grounds north of the Maritsa. [redacted] the international fair is located on the left side of the Maritsa, at a place called Karsiyaka, and that five buildings were erected there in 1948 with more projected. [redacted] locates the Plovdiv Fair Grounds on the north bank of the Maritsa River (item 19). 25X1
25X1
5. [redacted] 25X1
6. [redacted] describes the Nine September Spinning Factory in Plovdiv in detail. [redacted] the Bratya Chobanovi and the Balkan factories in Plovdiv were amalgamated with the Bratya Stanevi factory at Stara Zagora into the Nine September Spinning Factory at Plovdiv. The factory is located near the railroad station in the Khristo Botev Quarter. [redacted] 80% of this factory's production goes to the Maritsa Weaving Factory in Plovdiv. 25X1
25X1
7. [redacted] there are no factories in Plovdiv which employ more than 500 workers. 25X1
8. [redacted] Plovdiv has no street railways. 25X1
9. [redacted] the streets in the center of Plovdiv are paved and planned, but not in the old sections of town. 25X1

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25X1

-7-

10. [] five principal landmarks in Plovdiv, its five elevations, the fifth being Knyaz Simeon. [] a radar station on Sakhat Hill, an underground shelter under Dzhenem Hill, and two large tunnels or shelters under Bunardzhik and Sakhat Hills. 25X1 25X1
11. [] estimates the population of Plovdiv to be 135,000 (date of information: 1943), stating that in 1934 the population of Plovdiv was 100,485. [] according to the 1947 census the population of Plovdiv was 140,000. 25X1 25X1
12. [] of the minorities in Plovdiv, the Turks now hold first place since many Jews have departed. [] there are also some Russian technicians. 25X1 25X1
13. [] the Plovdiv railroad stations (items 15, 16 and 17). 25X1
14. [] a railroad line runs out of Plovdiv southwest to Batak (N 41-57, E 24-11). [] in addition to the Europe-Istanbul (Sofia-Svilengrad) line which runs through Plovdiv, there are five local lines to Karlovo, Asenovgrad, Peshtera, Pamyurishte, and Khisar. 25X1
15. [] the People's Provincial Council in a building belonging to the former chamber of commerce, east of the Maritsa Pharmacy and in the vicinity of the former seminary. 25X1
16. [] the Plovdiv Prison north of the Maritsa River and next to the 9 Infantry ^{UNCLASSIFIED} ~~regiment~~ barracks (item 18). [] 25X1
17. [] locates the regional State Security and militia headquarters in Gurko Street. [] places the Plovdiv State Security Headquarters on the southwest corner of General Gurko and Knyaz Aleksandur Streets, giving its coordinates as RA 487013 [] 25X1 25X1
18. [] Plovdiv's only newspaper, Otechestven Glas, is published by a Communist committee which has its printing quarters in a building behind the Communist Party Club. 25X1
19. [] lists nine hotels in Plovdiv. Only one, the Trakya, bears the same name as one of those listed in this report. It is identified as being located near the railroad station. [] lists nine hotels, of which the Trakya and the Bulgariya are the only ones which bear the same names as any listed in this report. 25X1 25X1
20. [] a tuberculosis clinic on Perustitsa Street, and behind it a former hospital, now used for housing. [] four hospitals in Plovdiv: a State hospital, a Roman Catholic hospital, a workers' dispensary, and a cooperative hospital. [] detailed information on the University of Plovdiv Hospital and the Military Hospitals in Plovdiv. One of the latter is the converted Roman Catholic Hospital. 25X1 25X1
21. [] 25X1
22. []
23. []

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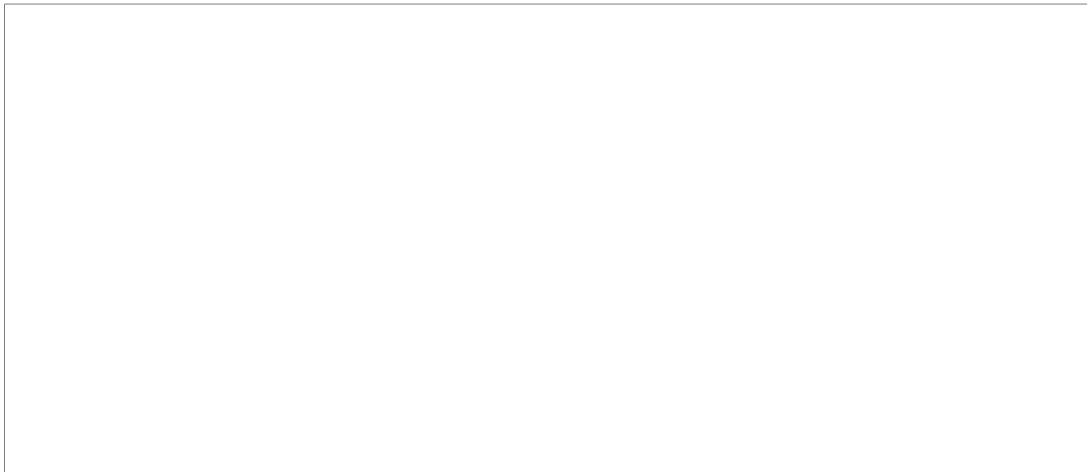
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-8-

24. [redacted] there are two football fields in the southern sector of Plovdiv, both enclosed within walls, called Levski and Khristo Botev. [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] two stadiums, the Lokomotiv and the Botev, in the southern part of Plovdiv (items 20 and 21). [redacted] a sports stadium just south of the Maritsa River. 25X1
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